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ABSTRACT

Guidelines on how placement should fit into the total school setting and in particular into career education as it becomes better established are discussed in this paper, one of a series on critical issues in vocational-technical education. The school counselor is viewed as the coordinator of the total career guidance, counseling, and placement program as well as having a major role in working directly with students. Career guidance, counseling, and placement functions are grouped into three categories: Curriculum based functions, individual facilitation functions, and on-call functions. Traditional processes and resources of career guidance, counseling and placement functions are discussed. Implementation strategies for career guidance and placement programs are outlined to provide an approach to a sequential system for program implementation, which consists of three stages: Precommitment stage, commitment stage, and implementation stage. The model-comprehensive approach to establishing a career guidance and placement center described here is specifically for the secondary school (7-12), although the concept can be modified and made applicable for either elementary or post-secondary education. Activities and community resources use are suggested, and a floor plan for a placement center is included. (TA)

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IMPLEMENTING A CAREER GUIDANCE AND PLACEMENT CENTER

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Implementing a Career Guidance and Placement Center

Introduction

Since World War II, the structures and values of society have undergone substantial changes. The world of work in particular has undergone dramatic changes both structurally and occupationally. Industrial and business structures have become highly complex and occupational specialization is increasing. Concurrently, the process of urbanization, a highly mobile population and the emergency of a wide variety of groups and movements asking for recognition particularly during the 1960's has brought about extensive psychological, sociological and economic societal changes.

To meet the challenge of change in the 70's and 80's, the educational community must assume a major leadership role. More specifically, career guidance, counseling and placement programs must be developed and implemented in a manner commensurate with other major educational programs. Career guidance, counseling and placement must be seen as equal and complementary with instruction.

Career guidance, counseling and placement is an educational program responsible for assisting individuals to develop self knowledge and interpersonal skills, life career planning and placement competencies and knowledge of the work and leisure worlds. It also is responsible for helping individuals understand and relate the meaning of basic studies and occupational preparation in their present and future lives.

Historically, placement has ranked as one of the high priorities of vocational guidance. In the Principles of Vocational Guidance adopted over 50 years ago by the National Vocational Guidance Association (1924) there is a strong statement of support for placement as part of the process

of vocational guidance--not the whole. There are numerous references to placement in high school vocational guidance programs in the early 1920's.

Recently, Lillian Buckingham (1972) in the American Vocational Journal described in detail the centralized high school placement activities of the City of Baltimore, Maryland, since 1928. She reported that they now have a staff of over 46 professionals to provide a free year round service to students.

More recently, many of the major textbooks in guidance have devoted special sections or chapters to placement. Usually, it is described as one of the several key services which a high school should provide for students. Guidance services are defined with placement as a significant part of the obligation of the schools to its students.

Besides the schools other state and federal agencies have, for several decades, put placement in the forefront of their activities. Since its origin in the 1930's, the U. S. Employment Service and its state affiliates have put placement first and have tried repeatedly to work with schools and colleges to fill their responsibility in this area. Vocational rehabilitation and various veteran programs have always ranked placement at the top of their priorities. When colleges and universities have established any student personnel service, placement has usually been the first to be funded. There seems to be no question about the significance of placement over the last fifty years and its defined role in the schools as a guidance function.

Flannagan (1974) in a recent issue of the Vocational Guidance Quarterly asked the question, "Whatever happened to job placement?" He speculates that interest in placement runs in cycles (something like the seven year locust!)

There is an obvious need to take a fresh look at placement because of the wide interest in career education. Much of the concern for this area is coming from vocational educators. In Virginia, Vocational Education Act funds are being used to support pilot placement programs using former vocational education teachers as placement personnel. In Tennessee (1972) a position of vocational guidance specialist with main duties as a placement counselor has been spelled out in a recently enacted state law.

Florida has created the position of "occupational specialist" and given this person placement related duties. In Ohio the area vocational schools have counselors who concentrate their efforts in vocational guidance with placement as a high priority. The recent American Vocational Association (December 1974) Convention in New Orleans devoted considerable time and attention to the subject of placement giving further indication of interest by the AVA and its members in this field. In contrast, the American Personnel and Guidance Association's New Orleans Convention (April 1974) devoted scant attention to the subject. There seems little question that there is increased interest in placement.

There are four good reasons behind a rise in interest regarding placement in the mid-1970's. One is because placement is, as Wasil (1974) has called it, the "Keystone of the Arch of Career Education." So, if career education is to be truly effective, then students moving through such a program must be able to seek, find, and maintain meaningful employment. Backers of career education know placement must prove its true strength.

Second, the general public continues to clamor for better results from their tax dollars being spent on education. Many have generalized this pressure into the rubric of accountability. The demonstration of ultimate accountability is the success of the high school graduate being able to gain

successful employment. Placement can be one of the main responses to outcries for accountability by showing how schools prepare students for meaningful careers. Feedback on school strengths and weaknesses through follow up can and should be a part of the total placement efforts.

Third, the decreasing percentage of high school graduates going on to higher education is at a 13 year low as reported by Michelloti (1973) in a recent issue of the Monthly Labor Review. From a high of 55% of the nation's secondary school graduates going on to higher education in 1968, the statistics reveal only 47% went to various colleges and universities in 1973. The preliminary figures on 1974 show a continuation of the declining percentage. This clearly spells out a direct pressure from students themselves to get the same kind of help in finding jobs which the school has provided for those going on to higher education. The unemployment rate of 20 to 24% among young workers also must be viewed as a strong indictment of our current placement efforts.

Fourth, studies at the state and national levels point out with clarity students desires for greater assistance in the area of career planning and placement. One of the most comprehensive investigations ever done in our field was reported by Prediger for the American College Testing Program (1973). In it he pointed out that students wanted and expected much more help from counselors and the schools in this area than they were getting. Only 15% of the national sample said they had any practice for job interview situations. Almost the same identical information came out in a 1973 Virginia study sponsored by the State Advisory Council for Vocational Education (1973). In this study approximately 65% of the counselors surveyed indicated they felt their work with individual and group counseling was not adequate with respect to job counseling. The results in-state, after-state and around

the nation confirm that both counselors and students didn't feel very good about what placement services are available.

A conflict has emerged between educators as to who should have the prime responsibility for school placement activities. Guidance literature is filled with studies depicting guidance, counseling, and placement as being in desperate need of revision. The kinds of problems and issues which repeatedly occur include the following:

1. Uncertainty as to how much and what kind of school community involvement the counselor should assume;
2. Confusion on the part of students as to what counselors can and should do for them;
3. Dropout rates which suggests that counselors, as well as other educators, have not done all they could do to resolve the problems and meet the needs of this part of their constituency;
4. In-school dropouts who are turned off to school, who merely serve time, and who could greatly benefit from exposure to several aspects of career guidance (e.g., career awareness, self-awareness, and educational awareness) but who seldom venture into a counselor's office;
5. Counselors' frustrations such as being isolated from the educational world, being diverted from the duties for which they are trained, and not being able to reach large numbers of students with appropriate guidance services.

These are among the important problems which any revision of the roles relating to counseling personnel will have to take into account to be successful.

Given a half century of uneven interest in placement, it appears from analysis of the past, the current situation and contemporary pressures, it

is time to set some clear guidelines on how placement should fit into the total school setting and in particular into career education as it gradually becomes better established. A mistake to be avoided is to see placement as a single action or event in the life of the individual. It is part of the process of career development. In great measure the success of even the best placement efforts will depend on the events of earlier years. How well the student goes through the process of career exploration, awareness, inquiry, experience, preparation, etc. will determine how much advantage can be taken of any placement service available. The student also needs to know and understand how to go through the process of self-assessment, job search, and personal preparation--for lifetime use--not just to have someone find a job for him or her. As the old proverb goes, give a man a loaf of bread and you satisfy his hunger today, teach him to bake and he will eat forever.

Career Guidance Function

The school counselor is seen as the coordinator of the total career guidance, counseling and placement program as well as having a major role in working directly with students in a variety of ways.

Career guidance, counseling and placement functions can be grouped into three interrelated categories.

Curriculum Based Functions

The curriculum based category brings together those guidance activities which take place primarily in the context of the regularly scheduled courses of study in an educational setting. These activities may be a part of regular school subjects or they may be organized around special topics in

the form of units, mini-courses or modules. They are based on need statements, goals and objectives necessary to the growth and development of all individuals. Typical topics focus on self understanding, interpersonal relationships, decision making, value clarification and the education, work and leisure worlds. School counselors may be involved directly with students through class instruction, group process or individual discussion. In other instances, the guidance staff may work directly with teachers providing resources and consultation.

Individual Facilitation Functions

Individual facilitation functions include those systematic activities of the career guidance, counseling and placement program designed to assist all individuals to continuously monitor and understand their growth and development in terms of their own personal goals, values, abilities, aptitudes and interests. School counselors and/or teachers may serve in the capacity of "advisors," "learner managers" or "development specialists." Personalized and continuous contact and involvement is stressed as compared to superficial contact with each student once a year to fill out a schedule. The functions in this category provide for the individual accountability needed in an educational setting to assure that the uniqueness of individuals is not lost and that educational resources are being utilized to facilitate their life career development. The performance of these functions may involve cooperative planning with a number of significant persons and focus on in-school and out-of-school concerns.

On-Call Functions

On-call career guidance, counseling and placement functions focus on direct, immediate responses to individual needs such as information seeking, crisis counseling and teacher/parent/specialist consultation. There is

immediate and direct response to meet specific individual needs. In addition, on-call functions are supportive to curriculum based and individual facilitation functions. Adjunct guidance staff such as peers, paraprofessionals and volunteers/support staff may aid school counselors and teachers to carry out on-call functions. Peers may be involved in tutorial programs, orientation activities, ombudsman centers and with special training, cross age counseling and leadership in informal dialogue centers. Paraprofessionals and volunteers provide meaningful service in placement and follow-up activities, community liaison, career information centers and club leadership activities.

Traditional Processes and Resources

Traditional career guidance, counseling and placement processes and resources such as testing and information are not replaced or discarded in this new organizational pattern. On the contrary, traditional processes and resources along with new and emerging processes and resources are used in all three categories of guidance functions. How, when and where these processes and resources are to be used, however, is related directly to the student goals and objective in each of the categories. Standardized tests for example, could be used in all three categories of functions and could vary from being an informational resource in curriculum based functions to being a diagnostic tool in on-call functions or vice versa. The use of various counseling methods also could vary in a similar manner. The same is true for educational and occupational media. The point is that none of the processes and resources are used just because they are available; neither

are they applied in a haphazard way. The goals and objectives and activities in each of the categories assist practitioners to select, use and evaluate career guidance, counseling and placement processes and resources wisely and effectively.

Placement Function

Placement represents an integral part of the services offered by the CGP Center. Through placement, the counselor assists each student in carrying out educational and/or vocational plans suitable to his interests, abilities and training. This service involves student placement in several different settings such as: work exploration, cooperative education, part-time employment, volunteer placement, and summer employment, as well as post-secondary placement.

It is necessary that the placement service be on-going, available throughout the year and free to all students, community members and employers. The placement information service provided in the CGP Center may be utilized by elementary as well as secondary students and personnel.

The service must be performed by competent, professionally trained personnel who are attuned to the employment world and adaptable to the complexities of the changing economic, educational and social values. A comprehensive placement service will also necessitate the involvement and utilization of the human and material community resources.

One specialized staff member may act as Coordinator of Placement Services. His responsibilities could include:

1. Conduct staff development sessions for the counselors for such purposes as understanding the economics of local industry, child labor regulations, union regulations, services of the State Employment Service and follow-up activities.
2. Solicit and maintain support of administration and instructional staff.
3. Inform local employers of the placement services, cooperative and vocational education programs, and provide names and telephone numbers of CGP Center personnel.
4. Plan and conduct a well-organized public information program to keep parents, employers, and community members informed of placement services.
5. Seek cooperation from community and civic organizations to encourage such events as career days, work-exploration contracts, parent days, and job preparation and entry clinics.
6. Organize and initiate follow-up activity with guidance staff; plan a method to maintain continuous contact with graduates and former students.
7. Assist counselors in developing a system of job order forms, referral cards, reply cards and evaluation forms for employers, and student evaluation forms to be used in the placement service.

In order to have a successful placement service, there are several necessary elements: outreach to students, co-partnership with fellow educators and employers, and meaningful follow-ups on which to build and adapt curriculum. The following activities are suggestions for providing for these elements:

1. A program for reaching out to students will involve the following: announcements concerning the CGP Center posted on bulletin boards, via intercom systems or local radio or television programs; assemblies arranged for the placement coordinator to speak to students and discuss the current job market, preparatory steps for job hunting and initial interview; student referrals to the Center by counselors, teachers and administrators; additional counseling and placement assistance for students who withdraw from school.
2. Student assessment includes both formal and informal testing procedures. This will help students become aware of goals, interests, abilities, achievements, and personal characteristics. Assessment is on-going.
3. Cooperative training and education programs will help students develop skills and aid in transition to the world of work.
4. Community survey and involvement will be initiated by the placement coordinator and guidance personnel. Personal contact with personnel in industry, business, professions, private agencies, and employment offices will provide the information kept in the Community Resource File in the CGP Center. This may be used by all educators and community members as possibilities for work exploration, on-site visits, classroom visitors, and job placement. Other useful resources may be found through the local Chamber of Commerce, civic organizations, personnel associations, businessmen's associations, parents, teachers and state employment services.
5. A series of clinics designed to prepare students for placement such as:
   a. clinics for filling out applications
   b. clinics for interviews and telephone tips

c. clinics for testing--college entrance exams, civil service testing, employment examination

d. clinics for appearance, salary, budgeting, benefits and unions.

6. The CGP Center staff will work with instructional staff to help them relate their subject matter to the world of work and to assist youth in the development of appropriate work attitudes and understandings.

7. The CGP Center staff will survey educational and training programs.

8. The CGP Center staff will coordinate the activities in the areas of cooperative education, business, industry, health services, and work exploration programs.

9. The guidance staff will investigate the plausibility and possibility of computerized placement, such as a Job Bank.

10. The CGP Center staff will plan evaluation activities and implement a program to follow-up placement of all students. A letter will be sent to all employers to elicit recommendations for curriculum changes.

Several resources for developing or improving placement services exist in state guides and commercial guides. Suggested materials are:

"Placement Activities and Materials" Baltimore City Public Schools, Division of Guidance and Placement.

"A Model for an Entry Job Placement Program" Atlanta, Georgia.

"Know-Knowledge Needed to Obtain Work" Teacher/Counselor Guide, Thomas J. Jacobson, Ph.D., Science Research Associates.

"Counselor's Vocational Guidance Manual" Pupil Personnel Section/ Regional Career Information Center, Department of Education, San Diego County, San Diego, California.

Implementation Strategies for Programs of Career Guidance and Placement

This section provides an approach to a sequential system for program implementation.

The sequential system for implementation consists of three stages: Precommitment Stage, Commitment Stage and Implementation State. The flow chart on page 14 provides a short summary of each of the stages.

Pre Commitment Stage

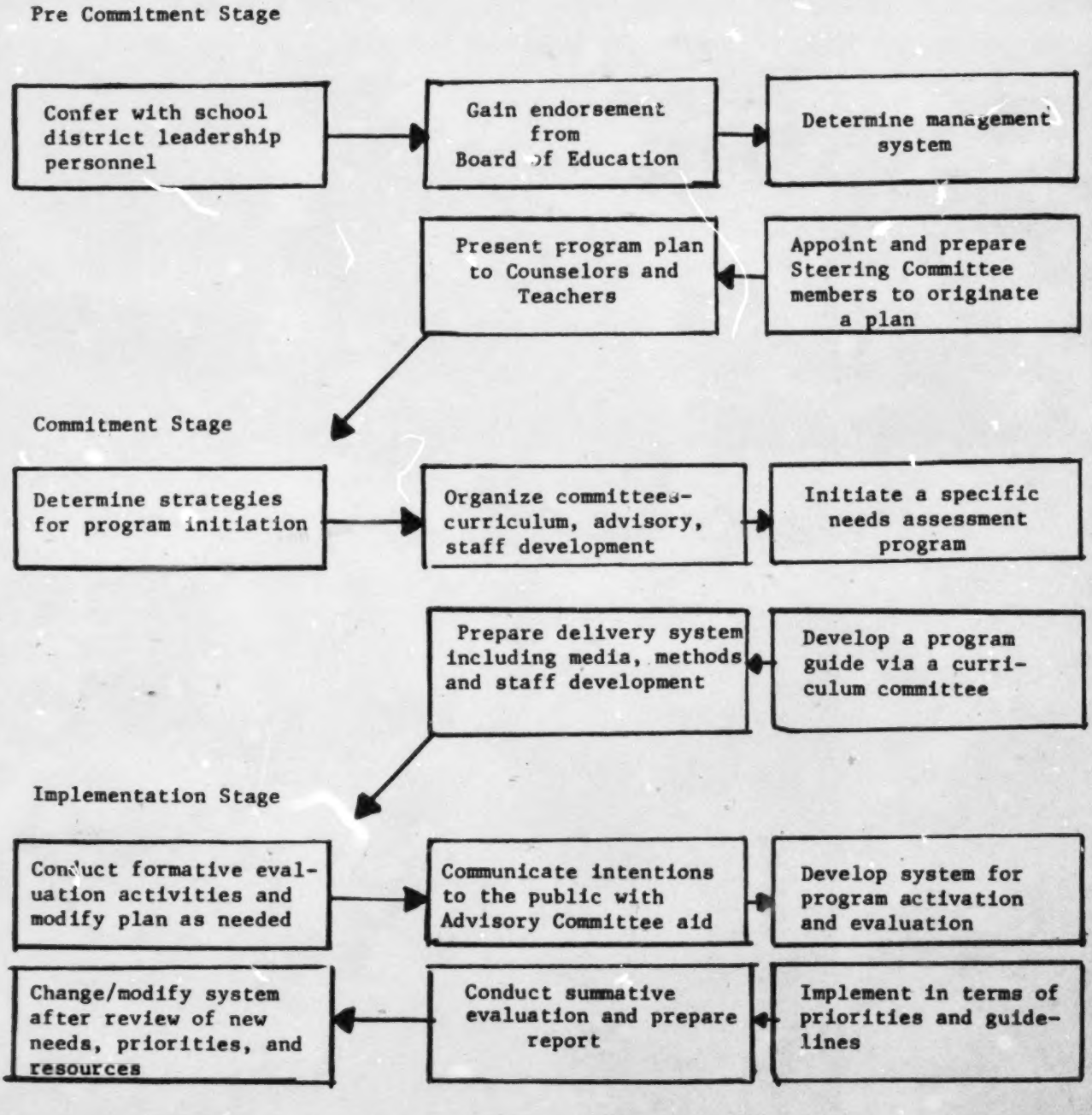
1. Confer with school district leadership personnel
2. Gain endorsement from Board of Education
3. Determine Management Ssytem
4. Appoint and prepare Steering Committee members to originate a plan
5. Present program plan to counselors and teachers

Commitment Stage

1. Determine strategies for program initiation
2. Organize committees-curriculum, advisory, staff development
3. Initiate a specific needs assessment program
4. Develop a program guide via a curriculum committee
5. Prepare delivery system including media, methods and staff development

Implementation Stage

1. Conduct formative evaluation activities and modify plans as needed
2. Communicate intentions to the public with Advisory Committee aid
3. Develop system for program activation and evaluation
4. Implement in terms of priorities and guidelines
5. Conduct summative evaluation and prepare report of results
6. Change/modify system after review of new needs, priorities, and resources


Pre Commitment Stage
Confer with school district leadership personnel
Gain endorsement from Board of Education
Determine management system
Present program plan to Counselors and Teachers
Appoint and prepare Steering Committee members to originate a plan
Commitment Stage
Determine strategies for program initiation
Organize committees- curriculum, advisory, staff development
Initiate a specific needs assessment program
Prepare delivery system including media, methods and staff development
Develop a program guide via a curriculum committee
Implementation Stage
Conduct formative evaluation activities and modify plan as needed
Communicate intentions to the public with Advisory Committee aid
Develop system for program activation and evaluation
Change/modify system after review of new needs, priorities, and resources
Conduct summative evaluation and prepare report
Implement in terms of priorities and guidelines

Career Guidance and Placement Center

The Career Guidance and Placement Center should be designed to be the hub of the career guidance, counseling and placement activities in the school. Effective planning involving all facets of the educational community will lead to a Center which provides a vital resource for all. In fact, if career is viewed as one's life, then the Career Guidance and Placement Center becomes a life resource center. Viewed in this way, the impact of the Center on school and community can be substantial.

A comprehensive Career Guidance and Placement Center should bring together available career information/exploration resources and make them easily accessible to students. The Center can be used for such activities as research, planning, self-exploration and group sessions. Students should be able to gain assistance in such areas as occupational planning, job entry and placement, financial aid information, and post-secondary educational opportunities.

Although the Center should be available for use by students, school staff and community members, it should be student-centered and many of the Center activities should be student planned as well as student directed. The center also should be a valuable resource for teachers in their program planning and implementation. Employers too will find the Center useful when seeking part-time or full-time workers.

Although the Center as described here is planned specifically for the secondary school (7-12), the concept may be modified and made applicable for either elementary or post-secondary education. At the elementary level, the Center might serve as the coordination center for classroom activities. The post-secondary focus could be much the same as that of the secondary program.

If community members and parents are involved in the planning and implementation of the Center, their interest could provide an impetus for the involvement of other community members. When parents and other community members become involved in programs such as the Career Guidance and Placement Center, they are able to have first hand experience with the educational process. Through these experiences new support for education can grow.

The Career Guidance and Placement Center should be furnished in as comfortable a way as possible for all users of the Center. Provision should be made for group as well as individual activities.

Coordination of the operation of the Career Guidance and Placement Center should be the responsibility of the guidance staff. All school staff should be involved, however. It may be necessary to employ at least one paid para-professional to ensure that clerical tasks are carried out in a consistent and on-going manner. The majority of the staff could be comprised of volunteers--both community members and students. This provides an excellent opportunity for the active involvement of these persons in the school program. Teachers and administrators also should be encouraged to participate. Their participation could provide students with the opportunity to get to know them on a more casual basis.

The activities of the Career Guidance and Placement Center will be as varied as the people involved in its operation. Many career guidance, counseling and placement activities are ideally suited for processing through the Center. Some of these are:

-Career Exploration Groups

-Providing Occupational Information

-Providing Educational Information

-Peer Counseling

-Individual Advisement Program

-Community Resource Survey

-Work Exploration Program

Placement should be an integral part of the activities offered by the Career Guidance and Placement Center. Through placement, school counselors and/or teachers can assist students in carrying out educational and/or occupational plans suitable to their interests, abilities and training. This service can involve student placement in several different types of settings such as: work exploration, cooperative education, part-time employment, entry level employment, volunteer placement, and summer employment, as well as post-secondary placement.

It is necessary that placement be on-going, available throughout the year and free to all students, community members and employers. Placement information provided in the Center may be utilized by elementary as well as secondary school students and personnel.

Placement should be performed by competent, professionally trained guidance personnel and/or teachers who are attuned to the employment world and adaptable to the complexities of the changing economic, educational and social values. Comprehensive placement also will necessitate the involvement and utilization of a wide range of human and material community resources.

One specialized staff member in the Center could act as Coordinator of Placement. Responsibilities could include:

1. Conduct staff development sessions for school counselors and teachers for such purposes as understanding the economics of local industry, child labor regulations, services of the State Employment Service and follow-up activities.

2. Solicit and maintain support of administration and instructional staff.
3. Inform local employers of the placement services, cooperative and vocational-technical education programs, and provide them with the names and telephone numbers of Center and other educational personnel.
4. Plan and conduct a well-organized public information program to keep parents, employers, and community members informed of placement activities.
5. Seek cooperation from community and civic organizations to encourage such events as career days, work-exploration activities, parent days, and job preparation and entry job clinics.
6. Organize and initiate follow-up activities with guidance and instructional staff; plan a method to maintain continuous contact with former students.
7. Assist school counselors and teachers in developing a system of job order forms, referral cards, reply cards and evaluation forms for employers, and student evaluation forms to be used in placement.

In order to have successful placement activities, there are several necessary elements: outreach to students, co-partnership with fellow educators and employers, and meaningful follow-ups on which to build and adapt curriculum. The following activities are suggestions for providing these elements:

1. Outreach activities involving such things as announcements concerning the Center posted on bulletin boards, via intercom systems or local radio or television programs; assemblies arranged for the placement coordinator to speak to students and discuss the current job market, preparatory steps for job hunting and the initial interview; student

referrals to the Center by counselors, teachers and administrators; counseling and placement assistance for students who withdraw from school.

2. Student assessment including both formal and informal testing procedures to help students become aware of their goals, interests, abilities, achievements, and personal characteristics.
3. Community surveys involving personal contact with individuals in industry, business, professions, private agencies, and employment offices to provide up-to-date information for the community resource file in the Center. This file can be used by educators and community members to identify possible locations for work exploration, on-site visits, classroom visitors, and job placement. Other useful resources to be placed in the file can be found through the local Chamber of Commerce, civic organizations, personnel associations, businessmen's associations, parents and teachers.
4. Structured experiences preparing students for educational and occupational placement such as:
   a. filling out applications
   b. interviews and telephone tips
   c. testing--college entrance exams, civil service testing, employment examinations
   d. appearance, salary, budgeting, benefits, and unions
5. Activities assisting instructional staff to relate their subject matter to the world of work and assisting youth in the development of appropriate work attitudes and understandings.
6. Evaluation activities including follow-up studies of former students.

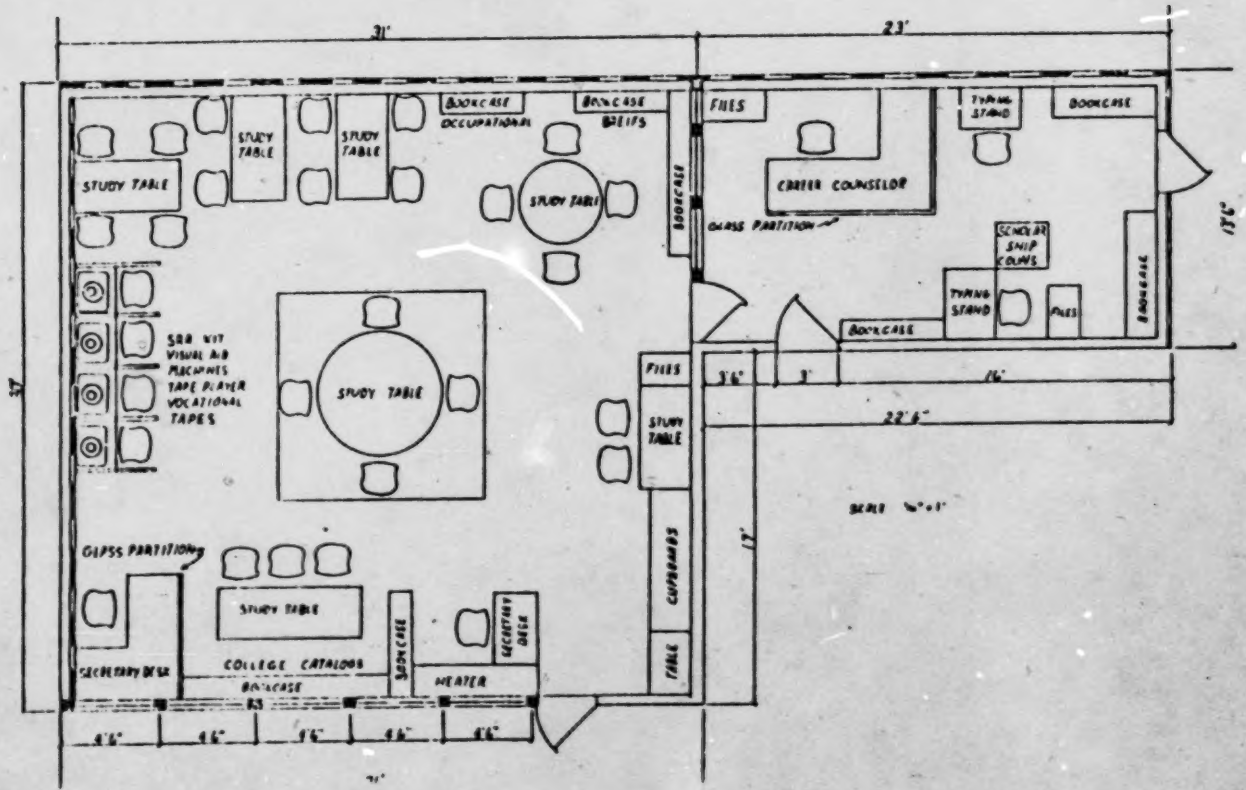
Several resources for developing or improving placement services exist in state guides and commercial guides. Suggested materials include:

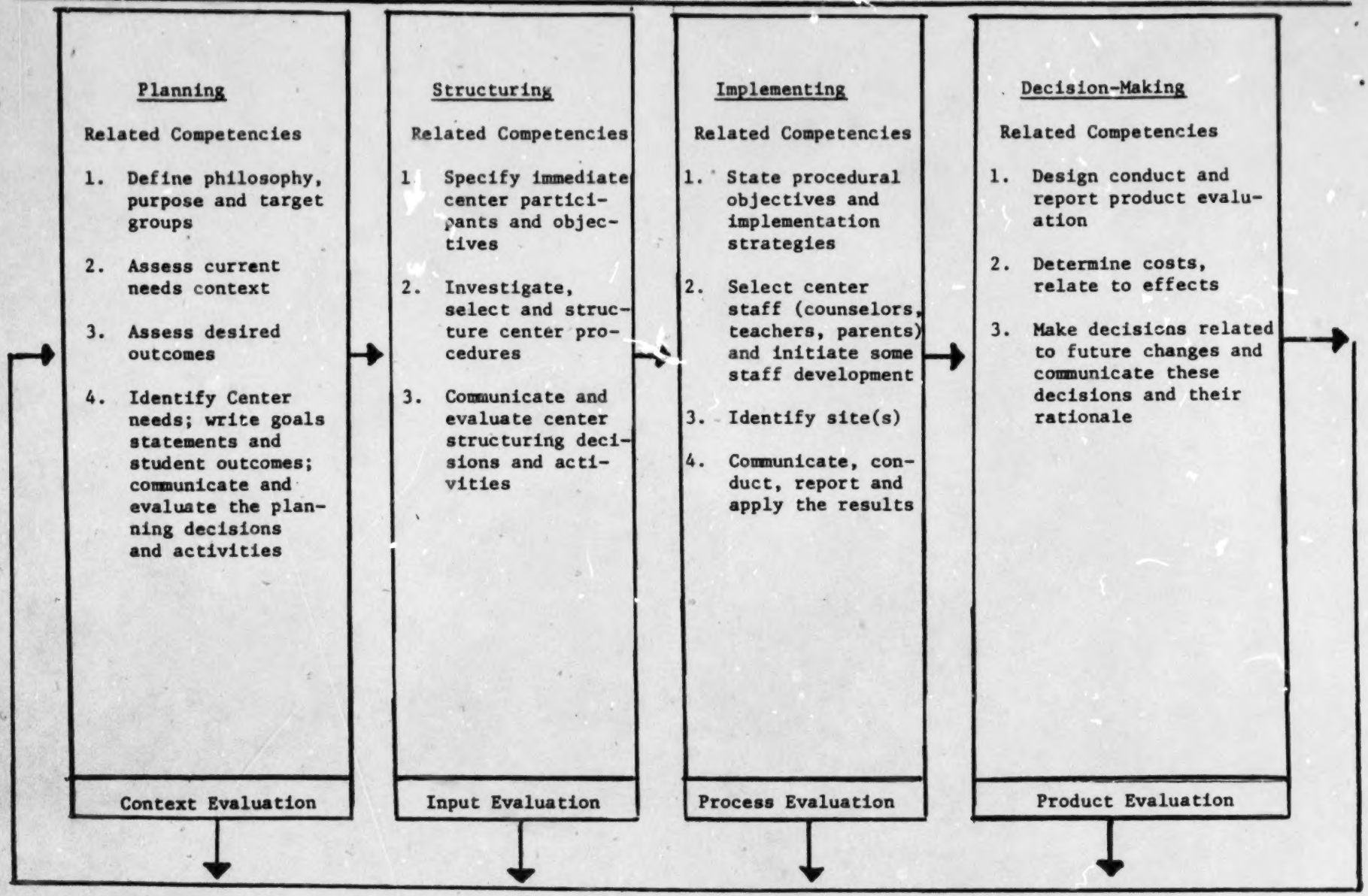
"Placement Activities and Materials" Baltimore City Public Schools, Division of Guidance and Placement.

"A Model for an Entry Job Placement Program" Atlanta, Georgia.

"Know-Knowledge Needed to Obtain Work" Teacher/Counselor Guide, Thomas J. Jacobson, Ph.D., Science Research Associates.

"Counselor's Vocational Guidance Manual" Pupil Personnel Section/ Regional Career Information Center, Department of Education, San Diego County, San Diego, California.




Planning
Related Competencies
1. Define philosophy, purpose and target groups
2. Assess current needs context
3. Assess desired outcomes
4. Identify Center needs; write goals statements and student outcomes; communicate and evaluate the planning decisions and activities
Context Evaluation
Structuring
Related Competencies
1 Specify immediate center participants and objectives
2. Investigate, select and structure center procedures
3. Communicate and evaluate center structuring decisions and activities
Input Evaluation
Implementing
Related Competencies
1. State procedural objectives and implementation strategies
2. Select center staff (counselors, teachers, parents) and initiate some staff development
3. Identify site(s)
4. Communicate, conduct, report and apply the results
Process Evaluation
Decision-Making
Related Competencies
1. Design conduct and report product evaluation
2. Determine costs, relate to effects
3. Make decisions related to future changes and communicate these decisions and their rationale
Product Evaluation
Feedback Evaluation Findings

MODEL-COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO ESTABLISHING CAREER GUIDANCE AND PLACEMENT CENTER

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